DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 309 638 FL 018 109

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TITLE Teacher Evaluation in Foreign Language Education: Behavior Alteration Techniques.
PUB DATE 7 Aug 89
NOTE 14p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Administrators; *Behavior Modification; Classroom Techniques; Correlation; Evaluation Methods; French; *Language Teachers; Second Language Instruction; Student Attitudes; *Teacher Effectiveness; *Teacher Evaluation; Two Year Colleges; Two Year College Students

ABSTRACT

A study examined the relationship between French teachers' use of behavior alteration techniques in the classroom, and the perceptions of individuals evaluating the teacher (students, peers, administrators) on the quality of instructional performance. Junior and community college French students, language teachers, and administrators responded to a questionnaire on the frequency of the use of specific behavior alteration techniques and their opinions of the best, average, and poorest teachers. Results suggest that the questionnaire was a reliable instrument for evaluating effective teaching behaviors and for evaluating the use of pro- and anti-social behaviors in the classroom. Further research into measurement that combines behavior alteration techniques and learning management skills is recommended. (MSE)

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TEACHER EVALUATION IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION: BEHAVIOR ALTERATION TECHNIQUES

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TEACHER EVALUATION IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION:
BEHAVIOR ALTERATION TECHNIQUES

Education is a vital part of our hope for the future. Knowledge makes so much possible and our schools stand in the forefront of it. Yet, there seems to be a sense of dislocation, a malaise within the educational community. Students are perceived as not as well prepared, teachers are pictured as less knowledgeable, and administrators are seen as overburdened bureaucrats. Within this chaos, hiring and tenure decisions are made. The evaluation and retention of quality foreign language instructors continues to be a problem. Historically, effective and ineffective instructors have been differentiated on the basis of their practice of classroom management and student learning growth. A typical evaluative instrument may contain the following items:

1.	The instructor seemed well-prepared.	Yes	No
2.	The instructor showed a good grasp of material.	Yes	No
3.	The instructor showed confidence before the class.	Yes	No
4.	The instuctor was aware of whether the class was following his/her presentation with understanding.	Yes	No
5.	The instructor used clear, relevant examples.	Yes	No
6.	The instructor's speech and lecture style contributed to his/her teaching effectiveness.	Yes	No
7.	The instructor permits and encourages questions and free expression of ideas, and welcomes disagreement.	Yes	No
8.	The students seem interested.	Yes	No

(Herold, 1975)

In addition to the traditional ratings and observations, many evaluators note how instructors manage error correction:

(1) rephrasing the question through reducing words; (2) prompting by giving hints; (3) rephrasing the question from one pitch contour to another; (4) providing a personal answer and querring the student about his/her answer; and (5) writing key words on the board or role-playing (Joiner, 1975). Other evaluators observe task engagement or how instructors involve students in learning (Woolfolk and McCune-Nicolich, 1984). Others identify transitions and pacing (Charles,1981) and monitoring of tasks (Emmer et al., 1984).

Suffice to say that foreign language instructors are armed with performance objectives, methodologies, linguistic axioms and psychological theories. The consequences, as we observe, often fall short of perfection.

One area of classroom management and control that has generated much research is the use of Behavior Alteration Techniques (BATs). Studies by Allen and Edwards (1988); Kearney, Plax, Richmond and McCroskey(1984,1985); Plax, Kearney, Downs, and Stewart (1986); Plax, Kearney and Downs (1986); Richmond, McCroskey, Kearney and Plax (1987); and Wheeless, Stewart, Kearney and Plax (1987) categorized power and teacher influence into twenty-two messages that altered student behavior and elicited on-task behaviors. Since effective student learning is the goal of instructors, power based strategies such as BATs may be employed by evaluators of teacher performance in the foreign language classroom.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

As we have stated before, teacher effectiveness may be a variable of power in the classroom, the power to change student behavior and to elicit on-task behaviors. Several investigators (French and Raven, 1959; Raven and Kruglanski,1970; Raven, 1974; Tedeschi, 1974) have defined social influence as a change in attitude or behavior by an individual through an agent. Influence may be intentional or unintentional. Power is, therefore, the capacity in real terms or the potential to influence others, or to resist influence from others (Michener and Suchner, 1972).

French and Raven (1959) identified five bases of power: (1) coercive power; (2) reward power; (3) legitimate power; (4) referent power; and (5) expert power. Coercive power involves the potential to deliver threats and punishment. Unfortunately coercive power has two drawbacks: (1) the subjugated individual is often motivated to flee this environment and (2) coercive power requires a high level of surveillance over the subordinated. Coercive power is somewhat analogous to a dictatorship.

Reward power involves giving positive reinforcement to effect a change in behavior. Rewards may be tangible and material, or intangible. Reward power amy be more effective than coercive power seeing that the former requires less surveillance. The beneficiary of rewards may remain longer in this environment as long as the rewards are abundant. The use of rewards may not, however, internalize changes in behavior if the beneficiary perceives him/herself as performing to obtain the reward (French and Raven ,1959).

Legitimate power derives from being in a specific position based upon the belief that one follows orders of persons in authority (Pruitt, 1976). Referent power derives from the fact that one likes or identifies with the person in authority. Most individuals want to be like their model and seek to emulate them. Expert power derives from special prestige and/or information about a subject (French and Raven, 1959).

The research dealing with power in the classroom relies heavily upon the aforementioned research. McCroskey and Richmond (1983) and Richmond and McCroskey (1984) determined that student perceptions of teacher power were more predictive of learning than teacher perceptions. Kearney, Plax, Richmond and McCroskey (1984, 1985) developed the typology of messages or BATs using student and teacher generated data. The relationship between student learning and BATs became more significant in McCroskey, Richmond, Plax, and Kearney (1985). This investigation found that communication training of teachers appeared to improve student learning. Plax, Kearney, McCroskey and Richmond (1986) and McCroskey et al. (1985) found seven BATs that were effective

in good classroom management: reward for behavior, reward for source, personal responsibility, expert, self-esteem, altruism, and duty. Plax, Kearney and Downs (1986) reported that selective BAT use was a significant predictor of teacher satisfaction at all levels of instruction. The use of prosocial BATs and satisfaction were positively related; however, the authors warned that prosocial BATs might be ineffective on extremely recalcitrant and persistent students in elementary and secondary schools. This study highlighted the differences in managerial styles of college instructors, and teachers in lower grades. Richmond, McCroskey, Kearney and Plax (1987) found that prosocial BATs were associated with increased cognitive learning if there was a focus on task engagement, verbalizing positive consequences, immediate and deferred reward, reward from teacher and others, responsibility, self-esteem, altruism, and feedback. Wheeless, Stewart, Kearney and Plax (1987) added the dimension of locus of control: persons with an external locus of control feel controlled by events, fate, and others; whereas, persons with an internal locus of control feel in control of decisions and tend to be perceptually active and/or sensitive. Wheeless et al. (1987) sought to determine the relationship between BAT use and locus of control. Externals reported more frequent BAT use by instructors: reward, guilt, rules, debts, and punishment. Internals were found to be more "accurate incidental learners". Externals tended to over-estimate teacher control techniques; whereas, internals made fewer non-normative under-estimates of teacher control. Allen and Edwards (1988) determined that principals' perceptions of BAT use differed significantly when best, average, and worst teachers were observed. This study found that reward-type messages correlated with effective teaching and punishment-type messages with ineffective teaching.

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

Statement of the Hypothesis

The problem of this study focused on the dynamics of teacher evaluation. McClellan (1971) found that principals' ratings of

of teacher rapport with students did not correlate with pupils' evaluations. McCloskey, Richmond, Plax and Kearney (1985) concluded that student perceptions of teacher BAT use provided a valid indicator of student affect. Allen and Edwards (1988) suggested that principal, teacher and student perceptions of BAT use were intercorrelated. These conflicting data and interpretations do not provide foreign language administrators with clear guidance. In the current study, we attempted to determine the relationship between evaluators' (administrator, instructor, student) perceptions of BAT use in the foreign language classroom.

RQ: What is the relationship between teacher BAT use and what evaluators (administrator, instructor, student) perceive as being used by best, average, and poor teachers of French 102 (Elementary College French II)?

Subjects

Data for this investigagion were drawn from three community colleges and one private junior college. Student, teacher, and administrator subjects were randomly selected by drawing from the four community/junior colleges' French 102 courses during the Spring semester of 1989. Students (N = 40), instructors (N = 3) and administrators (N = 2) were informed by letter from the investigator that this study involved normal course assignments and testing, and that a short questionnaire and personal data sheet would be administered around midterm. Further, there would be no penalty for not participating in this investigation, and their participation would not affect course grades. Foreign language department and/or division heads (N = 2) served as teacher evaluators since they recommend retention and tenure of instructors to the deans.

Table 1

Description of the Student Sample

Level	No. Students	No. Females	No. Males	No. Classes
French 102	40	22	18	4

Table 2

Description of the Instructor Sample

Teacher	A	B	C
Nationality	American	American	American
Years of Experience	10	8	12
Highest Degree	M.A.	M.A.	M.A.
Gender	Female	Male	Female
Total Classroom Load (French 102)	1	1	2
FTE (French 102)	19	28	35

Table 3

Description of Administrative Sample

Administrator	A	B
Nationality	American	American
Years of Experience	20	18
Years of Administrative Experience	10	8
Highest Degree	Ed.D.	Ed.D.
Gender	Male	Female

Procedures

Students, teachers, and administrators were provided a list of 22 BATs (Behavior Alteration Techniques) with corresponding BAMs (Behavior Alteration Methods). Each subject was asked to rate on a 1-3 scale (3 =frequently; 2 = sometimes; 1 = never) how often best, average, and poor teachers use the 22 BATs (Allen and Edwards, 1988). The underlying response choices implied whether the subject had observed the teacher doing what was described. High scores indicated greater frequency of the behavior.

Data Analysis and Results

Means were computed for each type of instructor (best, average, poor) across subject classes (administrator, teacher, student). ANOVA and Pearson product-moment r served as tests of inter-rater reliability. Alpha level of significance was set at .01.

Means for subject classes for each instructor type were:

Table 4
Mean Student, Teacher, and Administrator Perceptions of BAT use

Subject	N	Best	Average	Poor
Student	40	2.00	1.60	1.20
Teacher	3	2.09	1.67	1.23
Administrator	2	2.09	1.77	1.21

Results indicated a significant difference between best, average, and poor teachers as perceived by students ($F = 6.88$, $df = 2,63$, $p < .01$), by teachers ($F = 7.53$, $df = 2,63$, $p < .01$) and by administrators ($F = 8.01$, $df = 2,63$, $p < .01$). Across groups F-ratios were (Best: $F = 7.78$, $df = 2,63$, $p < .01$), (Average: $F = 8.80$, $df = 2,63$, $p < .01$), (Poor: $F = 8.10$, $df = 2,63$, $p < .01$). These across group F-ratios served as an indicator of inter-rater reliability (the extent to which two or more independent raters are able to assign or to exhibit the same behaviors on a given test performance).

Inter-rater reliability was computed across groups using Pearson product moment r:

Table 5
Correlation across Groups

Evaluation	Pupil, Teacher	Teacher, Administrator	Administrator, Pupil
Best	.94	.93	.90
Average	.90	.88	.91
Poor	.96	.93	.95

Results indicated that inter-rater reliability across groups ranged from .88 to .96 on the BAT. Such coefficients point to high inter-rater reliability and intercorrelarity. These results suggested that the BAT was a reliable instrument to evaluate pro- and antisocial behaviors in the classroom.

Using mean scores as a post hoc analysis, prosocial behaviors were listed: Deferred Reward from Behavior, Reward from Teacher, Self-Esteem, Teacher/Student Relationship Positive, Legitimate-Higher Authority, Personal Responsibility, Expert Teacher and Teacher Feedback.

DISCUSSION

In the current study, the BAT (Behavior Alteration Techniques) suggests that a new instrument may be used by administrators to identify effective teaching behaviors. Since rater reliability is a major factor in assessing the value of an instrument, the indices of inter-rater reliability in this study encourage the use of the BAT. It is to be noted that whenever students, teachers, and administrators agree upon which behaviors identify best and worst instructors, objectivity appears to ensue. It is also to be noted that antisocial behaviors such as Punishment from Teacher, Punishment from Others, Guilt, and Legitimate-Teacher Authority were seen as ineffective behaviors across groups. As previous research has shown, good teachers reward and build self-esteem; whereas, poor teachers punish, destroy self-worth, and undermine intellectual ability.

The theoretical implications of our findings are clear. However, the BAT does not take into account technique or methodology. It should be remembered that prosocial behaviors without institutional techniques routinely employed to introduce and to review structures translate into ineffective teaching. Perhaps the ultimate solution for administrators is an instrument combining BAT and learning management. At present no such instrument exists. Future research should address this issue.

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APPENDIX

BEHAVIOR ALTERATION TECHNIQUES

1. Immediate Reward from Behavior
2. Deferred Reward from Behavior
3. Reward from Teacher
4. Reward from Others
5. Self-Esteem
6. Punishment from Behavior
7. Punishment from Teacher
8. Punishment from Others
9. Guilt
10. Teacher/Student Relationship: Positive
11. Teacher/Student Relationship: Negative
12. Legitimate-Higher Authority
13. Legitimate-Teacher Authority
14. Personal (Student) Responsibility
15. Responsibility to Class
16. Normative Rules
17. Debt
18. Altruism
19. Peer Modeling
20. Teacher Modeling
21. Expert Teacher
22. Teacher Feedback